

COMBATING CORRUPTION IN AFRICA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the world goes through this difficult economic period it is important that we continue efforts that began when times were better.

A June 10, 2009 article in the New York Times entitled "Battle to Halt Graft Scourge in Africa Ebbs" notes that because of a series of assassinations, dismissals, and changes in power across the African Continent, some of Africa's previous efforts to fight corruption are weakening. It is estimated that a trillion dollars obtained through corrupt practices changes hands every year around the world, and a large part of it in Africa. This staggering amount is often the revenues from the extraction of natural resources like oil or diamonds, but instead of going to help the impoverished people of the country where the resources are located, it too often goes to line the pockets of corrupt officials. If it were possible to reduce by just one-quarter the amount of money stolen, the amount saved would be five times as much as we spend annually on foreign aid.

On his recent visit to Accra, Ghana, President Obama made it clear that the responsibility for good government and with it, development, in Africa ultimately rests on the shoulders of Africans. He said "repression can take many forms, and too many nations, even those that have elections, are plagued by problems that condemn their people to poverty. No country is going to create wealth if its leaders exploit the economy to enrich themselves . . . or if police can be bought off by drug traffickers. No business wants to invest in a place where the government skims twenty percent off the top . . . or the head of the port authority is corrupt. No person wants to live in a society where the rule of law gives way to the rule of brutality and bribery. That is not democracy, that is tyranny, even if occasionally you sprinkle an election in there. And now is the time for that style of governance to end."

I wholeheartedly agree with the President, and I also know that bribery depends on at least two parties—those who get paid and those who pay. Halliburton/KBR, a name we have all become familiar with for brazenly overcharging American taxpayers in Iraq, is reportedly under investigation for allegedly paying over \$100 million in bribes in Nigeria in order to secure oil-field contracts. Although we do our best to investigate terrorist financing, U.S. banks are not required to fully investigate the sources of their funds, and the proceeds of corruption can sometimes get through. Offshore shell companies and bank accounts, and lax rules for identification of account holders, make it relatively easy to launder illicit money. The lack of information across borders hampers investigations and prosecution efforts and slows the return of stolen money.

The New York Times article tells the story of Nuhu Ribadu, the former director of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in Nigeria, who led a courageous effort to begin to rid Nigeria of its endemic corruption problem but barely avoided an assassination attempt and was dismissed last year after reportedly refusing a \$15 million bribe from a state official he was investigating. In testimony before the House Financial Services Committee earlier this year, Mr. Ribadu pleaded that this country do all that it can to fight this global problem saying, "What can you do as a country, as a good people of the world, as leaders, to help be on the side of the 140 million desperately poor Nigerians?"

While there is no question that this is a problem that requires the hard work and sacrifice of citizens of the countries where these crimes are taking place, we also need to do what we can in the United States to stand with those people who are taking risks to rid their countries of the corruption that destroys governments and whole societies.

There are a few things we can start doing now. We can do more to hold our domestic banks accountable for the money they have. We can put regulations in place that will make the holding of illegal international money no longer a profitable enterprise. We can open up international channels of communication to make sure that, while maintaining appropriate levels of privacy, we provide investigators overseas access to the records they need to track down and prosecute cases of graft in their countries. We should do all we can to prosecute those who receive bribes by cutting off funds and, as much is possible, expanding our courts' jurisdictions to prosecute those who extort money. And finally, we can come down hard on companies in the United States that are using bribery to increase their profitability in third world markets.

This is a problem that many brave Africans have tried to tackle head on, and it has cost some of them their lives. Let us make sure that we are doing all we can to help.

COMMENDING TOM AND MAGGIE RYAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to salute Tom Ryan and his daughter, Maggie, of Shelburne, VT, for their goodwill gesture at a recent Boston Red Sox game.

Last week, Tom and Maggie were at Fenway Park cheering on the Red Sox, and they ended up with the baseball David Ortiz—better known in Red Sox Nation as Big Papi—hit over the Green Monster for the 300th home run of his career.

I had the good fortune to meet Big Papi last year at the White House celebration honoring the 2007 Red Sox World Series championship, and I was delighted to learn Tom and Maggie had

the opportunity to meet Big Papi too and present him with the historic ball.

In honor of the Ryans, and this important moment in Red Sox history, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the Burlington Free Press's story, Vermont Man, Daughter Make Big Papi's Day, by Sam Hemingway be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Burlington Free Press, July 12, 2009]

VERMONT MAN, DAUGHTER MAKE BIG PAPI'S DAY

(By Sam Hemingway)

SHELBURNE.—Going to Fenway Park is akin to going to church for die-hard Boston Red Sox fan Tom Ryan.

So imagine what it was like for the 46 year-old Shelburne resident to meet David "Big Papi" Ortiz, Boston's beloved slugger—inside the team clubhouse and within sight of the locker room.

Ryan and his daughter, Maggie, had that Red Sox dream-come-true moment Thursday night when Ryan ended up in possession of the baseball that Ortiz ripped for his 300th homer in the first inning of what ended in an 8-6 loss to the Kansas City Royals.

"It didn't get out by much," Ryan said, recalling the moment the ball zoomed off Ortiz's bat and hit the top ledge of the Green Monster wall in left field.

The ball ricocheted off the wall and fell to the ground below Section 33, Box 165, Row LL, a spot that overlooks left field half way between third base and the Green Monster.

That's where Ryan and Maggie were, in Seats 5 and 6, when Royals' leftfielder Jose Guillen picked up the ball and, acknowledging the appeals in the seats above, tossed the ball into the stands—and into Ryan's hands.

"We were just excited because it was a Big Papi home run," Ryan said. "People around us were all charged up, too."

Moments later, a security guard approached Ryan and asked him to come with him. Ryan thought perhaps he had done something wrong and that maybe he and Maggie were going to get kicked out of Fenway Park.

Instead, the guard told him the homer was Ortiz's 300th and that Big Papi had asked for someone to find out if he could get the ball back. Ryan said he was glad to comply with Ortiz's request.

"To me, it was the right thing to do," he said.

So he, Maggie and the security guard walked over to the team's clubhouse.

Along the way, a representative of Major League Baseball approached them and questioned Ryan about how he got the ball, just to make sure it really was the one that Ortiz had just hit. Only 19 active baseball players have hit 300 or more homers.

When the group entered the clubhouse to make the ball exchange, a door across the room opened and in walked Ortiz, grinning from ear to ear.

He's a mountain of a man," Ryan said. "Big smile, big hands, big heart. He was genuinely very grateful, kind of giddy, kind of excited."

Ryan said he asked Ortiz what he was going to do with the ball and said Ortiz told him and Maggie that he had talked to his dad that morning and was going to give the ball to his father while visiting him during the upcoming All Star break.

In return for the ball, Ortiz gave Ryan and Maggie one of his bats and signed it. Maggie,